

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of      Ronald N. DRAKE      Confirmation No.:    9231  
Serial No.:    10/774,819      Examiner:      I. C. Cintins  
Filed:      02/09/2004      Art Unit:      1724  
FOR:      CONTINUOUS SELECTIVE ION EXCHANGE PROCESS AND APPARATUS

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Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313

**PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL UNDER 37 CFR § 1.102(c)**

Sir:

Pursuant to MPEP § 708.02 and 37 CFR § 1.102(C), applicant hereby petitions to make this application special because several embodiments of the disclosed invention enhance the quality of the environment and contribute to the development of energy resources.

In the context of enhancing the quality of the environment, claim 1 is directed to an apparatus for removing undesirable components from contaminated water, and claims 37 and 50 are directed to a method and apparatus, respectively, for purifying contaminated water. Embodiments of these claimed inventions materially enhance the quality of the environment of mankind by contributing to the restoration or maintenance of the basic life-sustaining elements (e.g., water).

Embodiments of the claimed apparatus and method also materially contribute to the development of energy resources. As described in the Summary of the Invention:

The process can be used to selectively remove monovalent cations in solution when using commercially available ion exchange media that is selective for divalent cations. Process equipment is simple, easily scaled, and suitable for modular assembly and application. These capabilities and characteristics render the continuous selective ion exchange process particularly suitable for treatment of sodic and saline-sodic waters such as those produced during fossil fuel exploration and development....

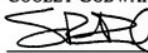
(Paragraph 7, Applicant's Specification).

In particular, embodiments of the claimed apparatus and method are useful for facilitating coal bed natural gas development by treating sodic water that is produced during the development process.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.102(c) this petition is filed without a fee.

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Respectfully submitted,

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